(a) whether the Government propose to recruit women in selected branches of defence services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b). The Government recently approved a proposal for have recruitment of women in the officer ranks of the Education, lagistics and the Law Branches of the Indian Navy. Induction of women in the officer cadre of the Non-Technical Ground Duty Branches, e.g. Administration, Logistic, Accounts, Education and Meteorological Branches of the Air Force has also been approved by the Government. A proposal for similar induction of women into the Army is also under consideration.

Visit of Indian Business Delegation to USA

382. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE pleased to state:-

(a) whether a high powered Indian business delegation visited the United States during first week of November 1991 in an attempt to garner American investment and partners for joint collaboration ventures;

(b) if so, whether the delegation has submitted its report to the Government after the visit;

(c) if so, the extent to which the delegation has been able to obtain the American partners and garner foreign investment;

(d) whether the Government have examined the report; and

(e) if so, by what time final decision is likely to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The Government has not sponsored any business delegation to USA during the first week of November, 1991 in an attempt to garner American investment and partners for joint collaboration ventures.

(b) to (e). Do not arise.

Direct Lending by IBRD to Private Sector

383. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has intimated to India that International Bank for Reconstruction and Development has examined the possibility of extending direct loans to the private sector without Government guarantee in the near future;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the time by which the IBRD is likely to provide direct loans to the private sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) No, Sir,

(b) and (c). Does not aries.

Priority Sector Lending By Commercial Banks

384. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to relieve the commercial banks of the obligation to reserve forty per cent of their total lendings to the priority sector at concessional rates of interest;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) other norms that are being revised